

## Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method for making silica, comprising:

delivering a silica precursor comprising a pseudohalogen to a conversion site;  
and

5        passing the silica precursor through a flame to produce silica soot.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the pseudohalogen is selected from a group consisting of cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyanato, isothiocyanato, selenocyanato, and isoselenocyanato.

10       3. The method of claim 1, wherein the silica precursor comprises silicon tetrakisocyanate.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the silica precursor is delivered to the conversion site in vapor form.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the flame is formed by combustion of a fuel.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the fuel comprises  $\text{CH}_4$ .

15       7. The method of claim 5, wherein the fuel comprises one selected from a group consisting of  $\text{CO}$ ,  $(\text{CN})_2$ ,  $\text{D}_2$ ,  $(\text{CNO})_2$ , and combinations thereof.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the flame is a plasma.

20       9. The method of claim 1, further comprising delivering to the conversion site a compound capable of being converted to an oxide of at least one member of a group consisting of B, Al, Ge, Sn, Ti, P, Se, Er, S, Ca, Ba, Y, Yb, Ta, La, Sb, and Bi.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising delivering to the conversion site a compound capable of being converted to germania oxide.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the compound comprises  $\text{GeCl}_4$ .

12. The method of claim 10, wherein the compound comprises a pseudohalogen.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein the compound comprises germanium isocyanate.
14. The method of claim 1, further comprising an environment at the conversion site that is free of chlorine.
15. The method of claim 1, further comprising delivering a fluorine-containing compound to the conversion site and passing the fluorine-containing compound through the flame to form silica soot doped with fluorine.
16. The method of claim 15, wherein the silica precursor and the fluorine-containing compound are delivered to the flame in gaseous form.
17. The method of claim 16, wherein the fluoride-containing compound is selected from the group consisting of  $\text{CF}_4$ ,  $\text{CF}_4\text{Cl}_{4-x}$ , where  $x$  ranges from 1 to 3,  $\text{NF}_3$ ,  $\text{SF}_6$ ,  $\text{SiF}_4$ ,  $\text{C}_2\text{F}_6$ , and  $\text{F}_2$ .
18. The method of claim 16, wherein the silica precursor is delivered in a gas stream comprising an inert gas.
19. The method of claim 1, further comprising depositing the silica soot on a deposition surface.
20. The method of claim 19, further comprising consolidating the silica soot into glass.
21. The method of claim 20, wherein the deposition surface is provided by a rotating mandrel.
22. The method of claim 21, further comprising drawing the glass into a core cane.
23. The method of claim 19, wherein depositing the silica soot on a deposition surface comprises simultaneously consolidating the silica soot into glass.
24. A method for making germania-doped silica comprising:  
delivering a silica precursor comprising a pseudohalogen and a germania precursor comprising a pseudohalogen to a conversion site; and  
passing the silica precursor and the germania precursor through a flame to produce the germania-doped silica.

25. The method of claim **24**, wherein the pseudohalogen is selected from a group consisting of cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyanato, isothiocyanato, selenocyanato, and isoselenocyanato.

5 26. The method of claim **24**, wherein the silica precursor comprises silicon tetraisocyanate.

27. The method of claim **24**, wherein the germania precursor comprises germanium isocyanate.

~~28.~~ A method for making silica, comprising:

10 delivering a silica precursor comprising a pseudohalogen and an oxidant inside a heated tube to form silica; and depositing the silica on an inner surface of the tube.

29. The method of claim **28**, wherein the pseudohalogen is selected from a group consisting of cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyanato, isothiocyanato, selenocyanato, and isoselenocyanato.

15 30. The method of claim **28**, wherein the silica precursor comprises silicon tetraisocyanate.

31. The method of claim **28**, further comprising delivering a compound capable of being converted to an oxide of at least one member of a group consisting of B, Al, Ge, Sn, Ti, P, Se, Er, S, Ca, Ba, Y, Yb, Ta, La, Sb, and Bi inside the heated tube to form doped silica.

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32. The method of claim **28**, further comprising delivering a compound capable of being converted to germania oxide inside the heated tube to form germania-doped silica.

33. The method of claim **32**, wherein the compound comprises a pseudohalogen.

25 34. The method of claim **32**, wherein the compound comprises germanium isocyanate.

35. A method for making fused silica, comprising:

delivering a silica precursor comprising a pseudohalogen to a conversion site;  
passing the silica precursor through a flame to produce silica soot; and  
depositing the silica soot onto a deposition surface, wherein the silica soot is  
immediately consolidated into glass.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein the pseudohalogen is selected from a group consisting of cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyanato, isothiocyanato, selenocyanato, and isoselenocyanato.

37. The method of claim 35, wherein the silica precursor comprises silicon tetrakisocyanate.

38. The method of claim 35, wherein the flame is formed by combustion of a fuel.

39. The method of claim 38, wherein the fuel comprises carbon monoxide.

40. An optical waveguide preform feedstock, comprising:  
a pseudohalogen.

41. The optical waveguide preform feedstock of claim 40, wherein the pseudohalogen is selected from a group consisting of cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyanato, isothiocyanato, selenocyanato, and isoselenocyanato.

42. An optical waveguide preform feedstock, comprising:  
a pseudohalogen capable of being converted to germania oxide.

43. The optical waveguide preform feedstock of claim 42, wherein the pseudohalogen is selected from a group consisting of cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyanato, isothiocyanato, selenocyanato, and isoselenocyanato.

44. The optical waveguide preform feedstock of claim 42, wherein the pseudohalogen comprises germanium isocyanate.

45. A method for manufacturing an optical fiber preform, comprising:  
delivering a silica precursor comprising a pseudohalogen to a conversion site;  
and  
heating the silica precursor to produce silica.

5 46. The method of claim 45, wherein the silica precursor comprises tetraisocyanate.

47. The method of claim 45, wherein the pseudohalogen is selected from a group  
consisting of cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyanato, isothiocyanato,  
selenocyanato, and isoselenocyanato.

48. The method of claim 45, further comprising a dopant compound.

10 49. The method of claim 48, wherein the dopant compound comprises  $\text{GeCl}_4$ .

50. The method of claim 49, wherein a fuel combusted to provide the heating comprises  
 $\text{CO}$ .